

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8320

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3920

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT SF RH

SUBJ: BOTHA'S AUGUST 4 TRIP TO SALISBURY

REF: PRETORIA 3912

1. I CALLED ON DFA SECRETARY BRAND FOURIE THIS AFTERNOON TO SEE WHAT HE WOULD SAY ABOUT FONMIN BOTHA'S TRIP TO SALISBURY YESTERDAY (AUGUST 4).

2. FOURIE STATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS PARTICULAR VISIT WAS TO DETERMINE THE NATURE OF THE "DEVIATIONS" SMITH KEPT TALKING ABOUT. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION IN WHAT CONTEXT SMITH HAD EMPLOYED THE TERM, FOURIE SAID HE COULD NOT RECALL WHETHER IT WAS PUBLIC STATEMENTS OR CONVERSATIONS WITH US (I.E. SOUTH AFRICANS). IN ANY EVENT, CONTINUED FOURIE, WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE SMITH WAS NOT TALKING ABOUT MAJOR CHANGES IN THE FUNDAMENTALS HE AGREED TO LAST SEPTEMBER. FOURIE SEEMED SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE TALKS ON THIS SCORE. HE SAID THEY WANTED A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING BEFORE GOING TO THE LONDON MEETING.

3. NOTING PRESS ACCOUNTS OF THE MEETING REPORTING SMITH AS SAYING THE PURPOSE OF THE AUG 31 ELECTIONS
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IS TO PAVE THE WAY FOR A NEW CONSTITUTION BY THE END OF THE YEAR AND ELECTIONS BASED ON IT BY MARCH OF NEXT YEAR, I ASKED FOURIE WHETHER THE DISCUSSIONS HAD COVERED THIS ASPECT. HE DID NOT REPLY DIRECTLY. INSTEAD HE INDICATED THAT THE SAG STILL SUPPORTED THE ANGLO-AMERICAN EFFORT AS AFFORDING THE PREFERRED SOLUTION, "BUT SHOULD IT FALTER, ONE MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO PUT IN ITS PLACE."

4. I ASKED FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF SMITH'S CHANCES OF WINNING AT LEAST 2/3 OF THE SEATS IN THE ELECTIONS, ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE RECENT DEFECTIONS OF RF PARTY STALWARTS TONY SCRACE (A FOUNDING MEMBER AND ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS OF RF) AND MARK MCLEAN (EX-CABINET MEMBER), FOURIE DID NOT PLACE MUCH SIGNIFICANCE ON THESE. MCLEAN, HE SAID, HAD AN ACOHOL PROBLEM AND IS NOT STANDING FOR RE-ELECTION. SCRACE HE PASSED OFF AS NOT ALL THAT IMPORTANT.

5. COMMENT: FOURIE WAS AS USUALY CAUTIOUS IN HIS REMARKS. THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF THE TRIP WAS, I THINK, TO REVIEW THE RHODESIAN SCENE WITH SMITH BEFORE BOTHA AND FOURIE LEAVE FOR THE LONDON TALKS. BOTHA AND FOURIE ARE GOING TO WINDHOEK MONDAY (AUG 8) TO TALK TO THE TURNHALLE DELEGATES. THEY DEPART FOR LONDON ON THE EVENING OF WEDNESDAY (AUG 10).
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERIM GOVERNMENT, MINISTERIAL VISITS, ELECTIONS, CAT-A
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PRETOR03920
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840090-2359
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770892/aaaadaeo.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 77 PRETORIA 3912
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1697678
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOTHA'S AUGUST 4 TRIP TO SALISBURY
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, SF, RH, (BOTHA, PIETER WILLEM), (SMITH, IAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5cf06f61-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009